

arising between a member of the society and an insurance company, turn the matter over to the county medical society for adjustment. It is more than possible that some physicians would make unfair and too large charges, but it is hardly imaginable that a county society would do anything out of the way or unjust and would not allow an account to be approved if it were obviously too large or dishonest or not commensurate with the income of the patient. This matter has been discussed with the managers of several insurance companies and is entirely satisfactory to them; if it is satisfactory to the various county units and if they will undertake to make the proposition to the insurance companies, doubtless nearly if not quite all of them will be glad to adopt it. One plan that is being followed by at least some of the companies, is exceedingly bad. They contract with one physician to handle all of the work in the state at a fixed amount and he pays local doctors—as little as he can get them to agree to take! Los Angeles has acted wisely in condemning this practice and the Council of that Association has adopted very clear resolutions setting forth their stand in the matter, which resolutions appear elsewhere in these pages.

IMPORTANT BUSINESS.

Not in the last twenty years have so many questions of vital importance to the medical profession and to the members of our society presented themselves as at the present time. They will come up for discussion and for action at the annual meeting next month, and every county society should be represented and every delegate in his place on the night of April 14th (Tuesday) at the Hotel Potter, Santa Barbara. Attacks upon medical men in the form of suits for alleged malpractice have increased enormously and reached serious proportions. Not one such suit was justified and not one was lost by us during the past year. Nor do our attorneys fear that such suits will go against us or be held to stand on appeal. But they cost money and time and trouble to defend, and if they are not carefully studied and defended, and verdicts allowed to go against physicians, there will be a perfect deluge of such actions and our profession will be mulcted of many thousands of dollars. Then we shall have the question of fees under this insurance act and the manner in which practice is diverted, together with the relation of this cheap work to subsequent malpractice suits which the society will have to defend, a most serious question. Should a member who signs this fee contract be allowed to keep his membership, and if he is, should he be defended by the society in case of a suit arising from such work? Do not fail to be at the meeting and let each county unit see to it that it elects delegates who will surely attend. What construction shall be put upon the income tax and how will it affect our relations with our patients? Shall we notify them that the law requires us to sue for an account in order to prove

that it is bad? Shall we establish a credit department in connection with the work of the State Society? There are certainly plenty of very important questions for the House of Delegates to consider.

TUBERCULOSIS; A ROUSING MEETING!

In the advertising pages of this issue will be found a page devoted to some remarks about the tuberculosis situation that are important to all of us and that should be read by all. At the next meeting, Santa Barbara, Thursday, April 16th, the whole day will be devoted to a series of papers by distinguished men dealing with the tuberculosis question. This meeting is arranged by the California Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis, and it is hoped that it will put new and enthusiastic life into that association and into the members of our society in their relations with the association. Look over the program as published herein.

"WHISPER HIM TO DEATH."

A school teacher in Alameda was charged with misbehavior with girl pupils; there was a thorough investigation and the charge was found to be absolutely groundless. Concerning the matter the San Francisco *Examiner* had this to say: "There was absolutely nothing in the charges, which seem to have been the sole work of a mischief-making and meddlesome female politician, but Principal Cohn will suffer more or less from the undeserved stigma anyhow. Malice finds no accusation so easy to bring and innocence no accusation so hard to dispute as is an accusation of sexual wrongdoing. There are always plenty of evil minds ready to believe the worst imputations of this kind, though made by the meanest malice and with no jot or tittle of truthfulness." The *Examiner* might have gone on and said that the very people who take a delight in circulating such unfounded and dastardly stories know all the time that the stuff they talk and distribute is nothing but lies, lies from beginning to end. Many a man has been ruined by just that sort of thing; a few survive a good deal of it and come out, after the years have gone by, stronger and bigger than they would have been. It is nearly always impossible to find the originator of these whisperings, and so there is nothing to be done in the way of fighting back; to walk straight, look every one in the eye and wait for time to make some of the whisperers ashamed of themselves, is about all the victim can do. Some years ago a physician in this State was completely ruined in this dastardly fashion; more recently it was tried on a prominent physician in a southern city, but he survived, as did two physicians in San Francisco who were also made the objects of such malicious attack. There are no words of contempt too strong to be applied to those who are so loathsome as to pass on this sort of thing; man is the only animal that can become so degraded as to fight in this way.